

Remarks/Arguments

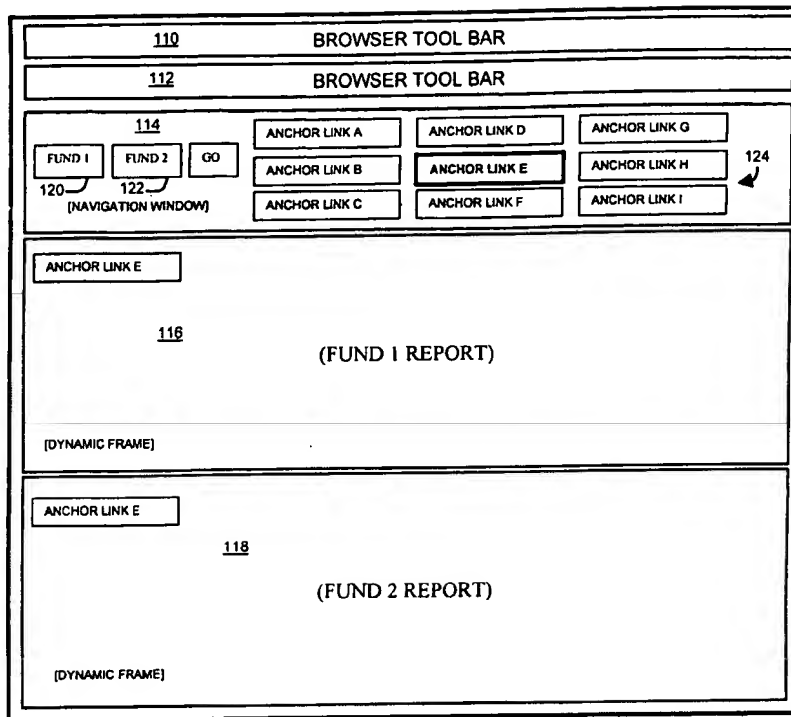
Reconsideration of the subject application, and entry of the proposed amendments, is respectfully requested. The proposed amendments place the application in condition for allowance and/or in better form for consideration on appeal. It is respectfully submitted that the proposed amendments are proper because they do not require further searching by the Examiner, and further more clearly set forth features in the claimed invention that the Examiner may not have fully appreciated in his earlier consideration of the claims.

Claims 1 through 15 are pending in the subject application. Amendments are proposed for the independent claims, claims 1, 7, 12, and 15.

Briefly, the claims of the subject application are directed to a method and system for comparing, in a side-by-side display, passages from information about different items, where such passages relate to a selected common topic.

One example provided in the application is where the different items are different possible investment funds, and the information about the different items is in the form reports on the different funds. A different report exists for each different fund, and a common tag is inserted in each of the reports to mark passages in them which relate to a topic represented by the common tag. Different common tags are used to represent different topics. In use, a user selects funds of interest, and a topic of interest. The common tag corresponding to the selected topic of interest is then used to extract passages in the reports for the selected funds which have been marked with that common tag, and displays the extracted passages side-by-side display in a visual display.

Fig. 1 of the application, reproduced below, illustrates the above example. "Fund 1" and "Fund 2" are the selected "items." "Anchor Link E" is the selected topic/"common tag." The passages from the reports for Fund 1 and Fund 2 that had been marked with the "Anchor Link E" tag are shown displayed, one above the other, in the figure.



The Examiner cites Sheppard, USP 6,026,397, in rejecting the claims, and relies, in part, upon Figure 7, reproduced below, and specifically upon histograms 146 and 148, and the data designated by 154 and 156:

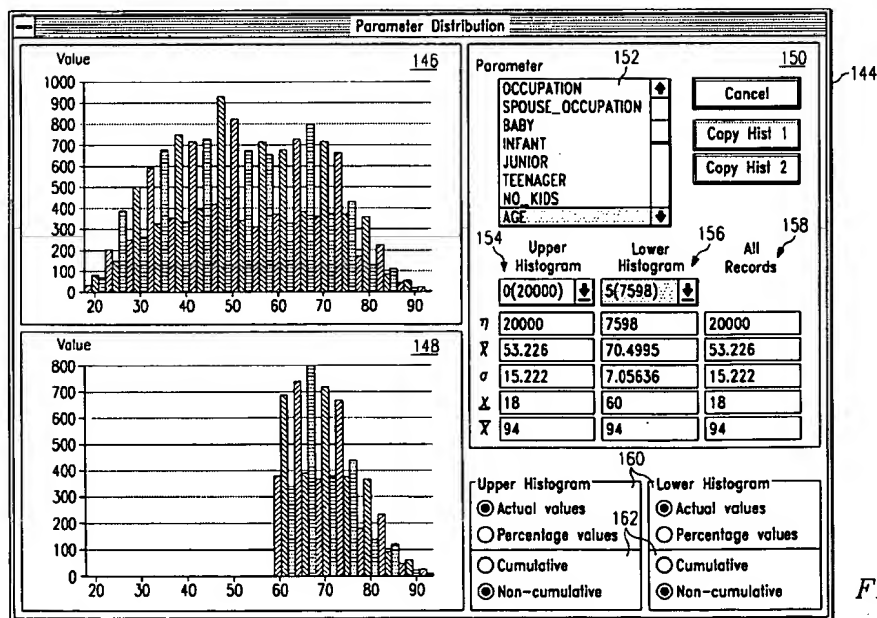


FIG. 7

As understood, Sheppard's Figure 7 displays statistical data about a database of records for a group of persons. The histogram 146 displays the distribution of the ages of the full set (20000 in all) of persons in the database, while histogram 148 displays the distribution of ages for the set of persons over 60 years of age (7598 in all) in the same database. The boxes below the reference designations 154 and 156 indicate parameter information about the histograms: (1) the subgroup of records in the database to which the histograms correspond, (2) the number (n) of records in the group, (3) the average (\bar{x}), (4) the standard deviation (σ), (5) the minimum (\underline{x}), and (6) the maximum value (\bar{x}) for the data set. See col. 11:63 to col 12:15.

Sheppard is dealing with a database in which data are entered into fields, and by querying the fields and evaluating the results, statistical data is obtained. In contrast, the claims of subject application as amended in the proposed amendment involve pulling preexisting passages out of preexisting documents (e.g. reports) on different items, and displaying those passages as selected by the user for the items selected by the user. Assuming that the Examiner considers an individual "person" to correspond to the "item" recited in the claims, it is respectfully submitted that the data displayed in Figure 7 cannot be said to be a comparison of information as between particular persons ("items"). This is because the data being displayed in Sheppard is statistical data. Thus, in histograms 146 and 148, each bar represents the number of persons in the database that are of the corresponding age, so that the bars do not provide a comparison of the age of person #1 with the age of person #2, for example. Thus, it can be seen that the Examiner's position (that the features of the claims, including claims 1 and 7, are disclosed in Sheppard's Figure 7) is misplaced.

Further, histograms 146 and 148 display subsets of data from the same database. Therefore, it cannot be said that histogram 146 displays information for one item, while histogram 148 displays information for a different item. Both histograms display the same information, only in different subsets. However, such different subsets are not different "items".

The proposed amendments to the claims are proposed to more clearly set forth the source of the "information" in which the tagged passages are found, namely -- each of the different plurality of items has an associated document that was prepared for the item and that provides the information being compared from that item. The proposed amendments thereby more clearly distinguish the claims over Sheppard -- in which the source of the data being displayed is a database. The proposed amended claims are therefore patentable over Sheppard.

The proposed amendment includes the term "document" which is not explicitly used in the specification of the application. It is respectfully submitted that the term "document" is supported in the original application by way of the discussion found at page 5, lines 3-11, of the specification concerning examples of the sources of "information" in the form of "reports" and "fact sheets," which are clearly documents.

For the above reasons it is respectfully submitted that the subject application is in condition for allowance, and the Examiner's indication to that end is respectfully solicited.

The undersigned attorney would welcome an opportunity to discuss the proposed amendments with the Examiner in a telephonic interview should the Examiner believe such would be helpful in moving the application towards allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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